



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

## Meeting Minutes

### Town Council Committee of the Whole

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk 860-441-6640  
Town Manager  
860-441-6630

**Mayor Heather Bond Somers, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Karen F. Morton, Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Rita M. Schmidt, James L. Streeter, and Harry A. Watson**

**Tuesday, October 2, 2012**

**6:00 PM**

**Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1**

#### **SPECIAL MEETING - REVISED**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

*Mayor Somers called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.*

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Morton, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Schmidt

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnayan.*

#### **3. Calendar and Communications**

*None.*

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

##### **2012-0273 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)**

##### **RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole meeting of September 11, 2012 are hereby accepted and approved.

**A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to adopt.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

#### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **2012-0134 Board of Education Contract Negotiations**

**A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Watson, to enter executive session at 6:05 p.m. to discuss 2012-0134 Board of Education Contract Negotiations and to invite the Town Manager to attend.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**Discussed**

*Councilors Schmidt and Peruzzotti arrived during the executive session and joined the session while it was in progress.*

*The executive session concluded at 6:34 p.m.*

**Roll Call:** Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Morton, Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson

##### **2012-0231 Amended Agreement Regarding Fitch High School Baseball Field - Update**

**A motion was made by Councilor Schmidt, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, to enter executive session at 6:34 p.m. to discuss 2012-0231 Amended Agreement Regarding Fitch High School Baseball Field and to invite Town Attorney Eric Callahan and the Town Manager to attend.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** In Favor: 8 - Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Morton, Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson  
Opposed: 1 - Councilor Flax

**Discussed**

*The executive session concluded at 6:40 p.m.*

*Mayor Somers noted that an agreement has been reached with the new owner of the baseball team.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2012-0275**

**Reallocation of FYE 2013 CIP Funds to Mary Morrisson Asbestos Floor Tile Removal Project**

**Discussed**

*Wes Greenleaf explained that this issues concerns the cost of the project to remove asbestos floor tiles at Mary Morrisson, which is designated as a school that will remain in the system. During the project, it was discovered that the concrete floor underneath the tiles was in poor condition and needed to be leveled increasing the project cost. Another project that was recently undertaken was the replacement of boilers at S. B. Butler. Unlike Mary Morrisson, S. B. Butler is likely to be replaced or fully renovated in the future. The boiler replacement project came in under budget. Mr. Greenleaf asked that the Council reallocate \$110,000 from the S. B. Butler project to Mary Morrisson. The expected reimbursement from the state for the Mary Morrisson project will be 57.5%.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

*Councilor Flax asked why the S. B. Butler project was so under budget. Mr. Greenleaf noted that a lot of the work was done in-house to cut costs. After the money was appropriated, it was discovered that the combustion equipment and header valves could be salvaged. Another factor was that one bid was considerably less than the next four bids. Councilor Morton expressed concern with the approach at S. B. Butler and the assumption that it will be pulled off line. Mr. Greenleaf noted that the question at the time the CIP was developed was whether or not to invest in changing the system to hot water and eliminating the steam boilers. Mr. Greenleaf stood by the decision not to invest in replacing the entire system considering the amount of significant work that would still need to be done at S. B. Butler. If it is later determined that S. B. Butler will be retained, a decision can be made to remove the boilers and convert the heating system to hot water*

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2012-0259**

**Sandy Hollow Road Curbing**

**Discussed**

*The Town Council received a memorandum and map from John Carrington, Assistant Director of Public Works, showing that all but one of the petition signers on Sandy Hollow Road do not have curbing. The road has been repaved and previously existing curbing reinstalled. Unfortunately, after the work was done there was a significant rainstorm that washed away the new loam and seed. That material has been reinstalled with extra erosion controls and the grass is growing.*

*A public hearing would have to be held for any additional curbing. When this item was last discussed, the Council did not feel comfortable with curbing the entire road and wanted to look at individual circumstances. Another option would be selective curbing. The Town Manager has asked the Director of Public Works to report on what areas of Sandy Hollow Road would benefit from curbing. There are undeveloped areas along the road, including Pequot Woods, that do not need curbing.*

*The Town Manager reminded the Council that they need to make a finding on proposed improvements as part of the scenic road ordinance.*

*Bill Spicer, 49 Noble Avenue, noted that during the storm, water was running down the church driveway, removing the driveway sealant and leaving debris in the parking lot. The curbing would have to start about 50 feet to the west of the westernmost church driveway to address the situation.*

*Councilor Peruzzotti drove and walked the road and talked to homeowners. She feels the Council should reconsider fixing this problem, noting the significant erosion that occurred as a result of the rainstorm. She feels that curbing is needed to redirect the water. Councilor Peruzzotti asked if residents could be notified when a public hearing is held on road repaving. The Town Manager differentiated between the scenic road requirements for a public hearing when changes are made to a scenic road and repaving in general. No changes were made to Sandy Hollow Road and a public hearing was not required, but one was held to be safe. There was no change in grade, the road was not reconstructed, and there were no changes to drainage patterns. The rainstorm was destructive because the loam and seed that had been placed had not yet taken. Councilor Peruzzotti noted that there is still dirt and rocks in people's driveways. The Town Manager will confirm with Gary Schneider that Public Works is following up on phone calls from Sandy Hollow Road residents.*

*The Town Council scheduled a public hearing for November 7th. The information from Public Works will be available by that time. Mayor Somers asked about highlighting public hearings on the web site.*

*The Town Manager noted that regardless of the outcome of the public hearing, curbing will not be installed this fall. Erosion will be minimized once the grass has grown. Additionally, some driveway aprons still need lips installed which Public Works is also looking at.*

**2012-0229 Central Corridor Rail Coalition Request for Support**

**Not Discussed**

**2012-0276 Candlewood Road Proposal**

**Recommended for a Resolution**

*Jay Fisher of Accubranh, a consultant for a bank that would like to move into the former Tim Horton's site on Candlewood Road, was present to address the Council. The Historic District Commission has granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for the building. Next, the applicant will seek site plan approval from the Planning Commission. There are access and egress issues with the site, which fronts on two state roads and the closed portion of Candlewood Road.*

*Dan Kroger from Milone and MacBroom described existing site conditions. They have explored many access options and reopening Candlewood Road is not an option. Their proposal involves establishing a right turn in and a right turn out on Route 117 via Candlewood Road. The road right-of-way would act as the driveway for the bank which would require a lease agreement or abandonment of Candlewood Road.*

*Town Manager Oefinger noted this portion of Candlewood Road is used for access to Bob's Auto and the Tim Horton's sites, although other properties do have frontage on the road. He encouraged Councilors to look at the road. The Town Manager noted that he is not comfortable with right turns out of the site because even with extreme geometric designs, people still take left hand turns. Candlewood Road is a public right-of-way, but this proposal moves toward designating it as a private driveway for the bank. The Town Manager feels that a fair number of people will turn into the bank to avoid the light at Route 117 and Route 184. The Town has no long term plans for the road. One scenario is abandonment of the road with the land being split down the middle and given to adjacent property owners. Another possibility is an easement or license for the bank to use the right-of-way. The Town Manager noted that this area is in*

*transition and if the 30 acre commercial piece of property behind Bob's Auto is developed, there may be different site access in the future.*

*The issue for the Council is to indicate whether or not they are opposed to the use of a portion of Candlewood Road for private purposes.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor Watson, to allow the applicants to continue the site planning process and express that the Town Council feels comfortable using Candlewood Road for private access purposes.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2012-0071 Library/Senior Center Veterans Memorial Plaza**

**Recommended for a Resolution**

*Councilor Streeter distributed a packet of information on the Veterans Memorial Plaza and a proposed addition to honor veterans of the Persian Gulf wars. The cost estimate for a new memorial stone is \$12,350.00. No Town funds are available so Councilor Streeter volunteered to fundraise as a private citizen. Mr. Streeter provided a history of the memorial plaza. Ideas for raising funds include establishing a donation account to develop a tiled plaza in the grassed area across from the memorial for veterans only. Space could be sold in a dedication booklet. Approximately 300 veteran memorial tiles could be sold at a cost of \$75 that would fund the larger memorial stone as well as ongoing maintenance and upkeep.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, to support Councilor Streeter's efforts to raise funds for a memorial to honor veterans of the Persian Gulf wars.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2012-0247 Groton Heights School**

**Discussed and Recommended no action taken**

*The Town Council toured the facility on Saturday, September 22nd. The Town is still developing the City Zoning Regulation Amendment application that would allow reuse of the property beyond what the underlying zoning allows.*

**2012-0225 Town Manager Annual Evaluation**

**A motion was made by Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to enter executive session at 9:13 p.m. to discuss 2012-0225 Town Manager Annual Evaluation.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**Discussed**

*The executive session concluded at 9:42 p.m.*

**Recommended for a Resolution**

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.*